

Tick borne Disease Work Group 2023

May 8, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Meeting location: Virginia Department of Health Office of Vital Records
2001 Maywill Street
Richmond, VA 23230

Meeting time: 1pm-3pm

Meeting participants:

In person: Julia Murphy, Virginia Department of Health
Chad Briggs, Virginia Department of Forestry
Carolynn Bissett, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Kathy Hosig, Virginia Cooperative Extension
David Gaines, Virginia Department of Health
Sammy Zambon, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Joshua Bernick, Virginia Department of Health
James Broyhill, Virginia Department of Health
Lori Flammia, Virginia Department of Health
Linda Grace, Virginia Veterinary Medical Association
Vanessa Wigand, Virginia Department of Education
Chris Haskins, Virginia Farm Bureau
Matthew Allen, Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association
Holly Gaff, Old Dominion University
Wayne Hynes, Old Dominion University
Ellen Stromdahl, Defense Centers for Public Health - Aberdeen

Virtual:* Monte Skall, National Capital Lyme Disease Association
Beth Sutton, Virginia Council of Nurse Practitioners
Maria Circosta, Virginia Council of Nurse Practitioners
Samantha Ahdoot, Virginia Chapter, American Association of Pediatrics
Kevin Lahmers, Virginia Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine
Matthew Shockey, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Jory Brinkerhoff, University of Richmond

*Members who observed the meeting and who identified themselves prior to the meeting as having a conflict or travel time barriers that made attending in person not possible.

Welcome and Introductions

Julia Murphy, State Public Health Veterinarian with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), introduced herself and welcomed attendees. She then asked all meeting participants introduced themselves to the group with both name and affiliation.

Report timeline and enrolled bill language review

Julia Murphy reported to the group that the timeline for the final report submission to the VDH senior leadership is September 1, 2023. Ellen Stromdahl inquired if a completed report in the style being described could be distributed to the group in anticipation of the next meeting. The goal is for drafts of

the report, some sections of which can be developed now, to be distributed in anticipation of each meeting and reviewed as the meetings progress throughout the summer in order to meet the September 1, 2023 deadline. The language of HB2008, which was enacted by the 2023 General Assembly on March 21, 2023, and major aspects of tick borne disease that the work group has been tasked with addressing in its report were reviewed, namely:

- (i) increasing public awareness of tick-borne diseases and strategies for preventing tick-borne diseases,
- (ii) educating health care providers and the public about the importance of and need for early diagnosis and treatment of tick-borne diseases,
- (iii) improving public health surveillance and data collection related to tick-borne diseases, and
- (iv) developing and implementing strategies to reduce tick populations and reduce the risk of exposure to and transmission of tick-borne diseases in the Commonwealth.

Meeting format and future meetings

Julia Murphy proposed four additional meetings; one each to focus on the four items outlined in the enacted bill. The work group was in general agreement. She emphasized the importance of the majority of work group members being present in person for most of the meetings even though it may be possible to have one all virtual meeting. Dates of future meetings were discussed and May 17 was chosen as the next meeting date. The meeting scheduled for May 17, 2023 will be held from 11a-3pm at the Virginia Farm Bureau location in Goochland County, specifically 12580 West Creek Parkway, Richmond, Virginia, 23238. As discussed, a majority of work group members will need to attend in person and a majority indicated that this was possible. This meeting will feature presentations by work group members, Holly Gaff, Wayne Hynes, David Gaines and, possibly, Robyn Nadolny, and will focus on tick ecology and surveillance trends associated with ticks of public health importance as well as strategies and challenges of environmental tick control. To determine additional dates and places, a Doodle poll and a survey will be distributed to work group members by May 15, 2023.

Julia Murphy proposed, and the group discussed, the order of discussion associated with the other items included in HB2008. The group discussed the merits of focusing on the public health surveillance aspect of HB2008 in the meeting scheduled immediately after May 17 and then taking up the healthcare provider and general public education aspects of the bill after that. The group was in agreement that topics should be discussed in this order. Venessa Wigand suggested that HB850 (available at <https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?221+sum+HB850>), which was engrossed as part of the 2022 General Assembly, should be taken into consideration as part of our deliberations on these items as some activities that Virginia Department of Education and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation initiated as a result of that bill may dovetail with the some of what this group is being asked to address. The language of HB850 was read aloud for the group's awareness.

Public Comment

No public comment was provided.

The meeting was adjourned at 3pm.

